



The Condition of Higher Education in Tennessee

The 1st annual report on progress toward the revised goals of Tennessee *Challenge 2000* for the State's Public and Private Higher Education Institutions.



The Condition of Higher Education in Tennessee: Background

- 1984 - Higher Education - Bragg marks
- 1989 - Public Act established *Challenge 2000*
- 1993 - Public Act required triennial study of independent institutions
- 1994 - 2001 - Progress reported on *Challenge 2000*, a performance report based upon SREB's Educational Benchmarks 2000 study.
- 2002 - Revised goals and benchmarks developed



An Overview of Progress Towards Meeting the Original Goals of *Challenge 2000*

- Tennessee will be among the leading Southern states in providing college education to its citizens.
- Tennessee will be a national leader in improving the quality of instructional programs and demonstrating this improvement through statewide and institutional assessment.
- Tennessee's colleges and universities will be among the nation's leading institutions in preparing graduates with the knowledge and skills essential for effective teaching.
- Tennessee will have improved the quality and quantity of research and public service.
- Tennessee's higher education institutions will be able to compete for the very best faculty and staff.
- Tennessee's higher education institutions will have generated sufficient resources to achieve the high quality and access envisioned in these goals.



**Areas of Improvement in
Tennessee Higher Education
During the Period of
*Challenge 2000***



Enrollment Benchmarks

- Overall undergraduate headcount enrollment has increased 8.9% since 1990.
- Overall enrollment of Tennesseans in public institutions has increased almost 9% since 1990, and Tennesseans represent 87% of the total enrollment.
- Participation rates for female students have increased at three times that of their male peers.
- Participation rates for recent high school graduates have increased from 49% in 1994 to 56.7% in 2000.
- The undergraduate enrollment rate of African-Americans has increased 42.3% since 1990.
- The “gap” in persistence rates has declined between African-Americans and Whites.
- The number of non-traditional students (aged 25-30) returning to college in order to continue their education has increased 2.7% since 1990.



Other Areas of Improvement

- The number of teacher education completers has increased 29%. Furthermore, Tennessee has approximately a 95% pass rate on the PRAXIS exam.
- Overall, licensure pass rates continue to remain high and exceed national norms.
- Job placement rates remain high, with two-year institutions placing 90% of their vocational graduates.
- 98% program accreditation at universities; 100% at two-year institutions.



“Quality” Benchmarks

- Overall persistence-to-graduation rates have increased to 47% at public universities.
- Overall persistence-to-graduation rates have increased to 61% at the technology centers.
- The overall fall-to-fall retention rate for universities was 80.5%, and 59.7% for two-year institutions in Fall 1999-00.



Additional Improvement Needed

- For the 1994 cohort, the persistence-to-graduation rates at many institutions remain below 40%.
- Overall funding for higher education in Tennessee remains below the SREB average.
- Faculty salaries in Tennessee remain below SREB averages.
- State expenditures for financial aid remain below national and SREB averages.
- The percentage of adults in Tennessee with a bachelor's degree remains below both the SREB and national average.



An Overview of Planning, Performance, and Effectiveness Initiatives in Tennessee



Policy and Political Landscape

The 1990's were an unstable era for higher education personified by

- flat enrollment
- reduced funding levels
- increased pressure from various clientele groups
- changing business needs and job markets
- increased calls for accountability in higher education



Focus on Accountability

The increased national emphasis on accountability and assessment have placed institutions under the “crosshairs” of legislative oversight. In order to ensure that both internal and external accountability concerns are addressed by this movement to direct legislative oversight, it is critical that states re-evaluate their accountability policies and programs.



Changing Policy Arena

- Funding for results ties performance to state priorities
- Increased prevalence of performance systems yet varied forms of policy adoption
- Unstable policy environment typified by decreased funding and increased expectations
- *The Paradigm Shift in Higher Education:* Increased calls for public accountability



Public Chapter 994

- The General Assembly in Public Chapter 994 (the 2000 Appropriations Bill) directed the Comptroller's Office of Research, the Office of Legislative Budget Analysis, and the Budget Division of the Department of Finance and Administration to conduct a joint study of Tennessee's higher education performance and accountability system.
- The purpose of the study was to address “potential outcome measures and performance benchmarks that could be used to measure progress toward specific goals for access to, and utilization, quality, and competitiveness of, Tennessee's higher education system.”



Findings of Public Chapter 994

- Tennessee's higher education accountability system has limited consequences related to funding.
- Tennessee's planning, budgeting, and reporting processes are not integrated. Furthermore, the goals are too broad, and do not contain benchmarks, thus making measurement towards progress difficult.
- Performance funding indicators are not tied to the Master Plan goals and objectives.
- Tennessee does not participate in a rigorous validation process of the performance indicators used.
- Tennessee's accountability system lacks comparative information, although comparability is improving.
- Compared to other states, THEC has little performance and accountability information readily available to the public.



Recommendations of Public Chapter 994 Related to *Challenge 2000*

- THEC should produce a single planning and performance document for higher education.
- Tennessee's accountability system should include measurable objectives, baselines, and benchmarks. Furthermore, THEC should increase the public availability of performance information.
- Tennessee's accountability system should include more student outcome indicators. Furthermore, it should include more performance indicators on the linkages between K-12 and higher education.
- The accountability system should compare state institutions to regional averages, national averages, and similar institutions.
- Tennessee should include more financial reporting and consider participating in the Delaware Cost Study.



Resultant Activities

- Factbook for Higher Education (Published July 12, 2001)
- Development of a replacement document for *Challenge 2000*
- Performance Funding webpage
 - www.state.tn.us/thec/ACADEMIC/PF/index.html
- Institutional participation in the Delaware Cost Study
- Increased policy focus by the Commission staff
- Roundtables on higher education issues in Tennessee
- *Current Issues in Tennessee Higher Education and Public Policy* (To be published February 15, 2002)



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- *Goal 1 - Educating Tennesseans (Access and Attainment)*
 - By the year 2010, higher education will reduce the gap between Tennessee and southern region states in providing higher education to its citizens.
- *Goal 2 - Student Performance and Academic Quality*
 - By the year 2010, higher education will improve the quality of instructional programs and student performance by linking assessment results with continuous improvement.



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- *Goal 3. Enabling Tennesseans: Seamless Education*
 - By the year 2010, Tennessee will establish and document seamless educational transitions for students from pre-kindergarten through higher education.
- *Goal 4 - Strengthening P-16 Education*
 - By the year 2010, Tennessee colleges and universities will support and improve the effectiveness of teacher, school, and P-16 development programs.



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- *Goal 5 - Financial Resources and Utilization*
 - By the year 2010, Tennessee will improve higher education resource efficiency and development in reference to national benchmarks.
- *Goal 6 - Workforce, Economic and Community Development*
 - By the year 2010, the role of higher education in Tennessee workforce, economic, and development will be delineated, documented, and strengthened.



Examples of Revised Measurements and Indicators

1. The rates of retention at public and private universities will be equal to the SREB average.

- Assessment: Retention Rates

✓ <i>Target</i> :	2009-10	80.5%	Current Retention (SREB)
✓ <i>Baseline</i> :	2000-01	71.7%	Current Retention rate (TN public)

1. The percentage of Tennessee adults with baccalaureate degrees will reach the SREB baseline average of 21.7 percent.

- Assessment: Percentage of Tennesseans with baccalaureate degree

✓ <i>Target</i> :	2009-10	21.7%	Current SREB average
✓ <i>Baseline</i> :	2000-01	17.7%	Current Tennessee average

1. By the year 2010, the level of student satisfaction with their overall higher education experience will exceed 90 percent.

- Assessment: Responses to biennial Enrolled Student Survey

✓ <i>Target</i> :	2009-10	90 percent of students satisfied with their overall educational experience
✓ <i>Baseline</i> :	2001-02	91 percent (2000-01 ESS survey)



Conclusions

- *Conditions* builds upon external evaluations of Tennessee higher education
- *Conditions* was developed by consultant team external to THEC and the governing boards
- Indicators are tied to national and regional benchmarks of performance
- *Conditions* contains critical P-16 indicators
- *Conditions* provides a framework for excellence in Tennessee
- While striving for excellence, it is built upon realistic funding expectations



